

California Department of Aging
Senior Companion Program Narrative
Older Californians Act Community-Based Services Program

Program / Element / Component -- 40.90.70

Description

The Senior Companion Program (SCP) provides supportive services to adults with physical, emotional or mental health limitations, the majority of whom are elderly, in an effort to achieve and maintain their highest level of independent living. The Program has a dual purpose: first, to engage in volunteer service persons aged 60 years and older, particularly those with limited income; second, to meet critical community needs and to provide a high-quality experience that will enrich the lives of the volunteers and those they serve.

Senior Companion volunteers assist homebound clients with chores, light housekeeping, paying bills, grocery shopping, and transportation to medical and other appointments. In institutional settings, such as mental health and skilled nursing facilities, Senior Companion volunteers assist with validation therapy and encourage participation in prescribed activities designed to help the individual to regain independence. Many Senior Companion volunteers have prior work experience with persons diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, stroke, diabetes, and mental illness.

The amended State Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-10 eliminated the equivalent of nine months of Older Californians Act (OCA) State General Fund (GF) for SCP in FY 2009-10 and all future GF. However, the statutory authority for the Program continues under the OCA.

Benefits

Senior Companion volunteers receive a tax-exempt stipend of \$2.65 per hour, a free meal or meal reimbursement for each day of service; reimbursement for transportation to and from the work site; supplemental accident, personal liability and excess automobile insurance coverage; an annual physical examination; and personal recognition for their efforts. In many instances, the Senior Companion volunteer is an integral part of a care management team and is trained in how and when to alert doctors and/or family members of their clients' potential health problems and other needs.

Eligibility

<i>Age</i>	60 or older
<i>Income</i>	Income requirements are 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines level. Medical expenses may be subtracted from income to meet eligibility standards. Income guidelines are established by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).
<i>Other</i>	Senior Companion volunteers must be willing to serve between 20 to 40 hours per week, up to a maximum of 2,088 hours per year. Participants must receive 20 hours of pre-service orientation training before assignment and monthly in-service training thereafter.

Access

Information about SCP and how to receive services is available through the statewide toll-free Senior Information Line at **1-800-510-2020** and the California Department of Aging website at www.aging.ca.gov. Information also is available through the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) at www.seniorcorps.gov.

Current State Fiscal Year Funding Information (2010-11)

<i>Source</i>	State GF, local funds, and in-kind contributions The amended State Budget for FY 2009-10 eliminated the equivalent of nine months of OCA GF for the Senior Companion Program in FY 2009-10 and all future GF.
<i>Allocation Formula</i>	CDA distributes OCA Community-Based Services Program (CBSP) allocations uniformly to the AAAs, except when a specific allocation has been established through the legislative process.
<i>Match Requirements</i>	10 percent
<i>Other Funding Information</i>	Allocated Senior Companion funds can be transferred to other CBSPs. AAAs can choose not to fund/administer the Senior Companion Program.
<i>Funding Cycle</i>	July 1 – June 30